

The Relationship between Paternalistic Leadership and Bullying Behaviours towards Classroom Teachers

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between bullying behaviours towards classroom teachers and paternalistic leadership. The sample of this study included 283 classroom teachers from 20 elementary schools in the Bolu province. The data in this study were collected using Negative Acts Questionnaire and Paternalistic Leadership scale. Mean, correlation, and stepwise regression test were used in data analysis. The results of Pearson correlation analyses indicated that paternalistic leadership significantly negative correlated with work-related criticism, social isolation, non-work-related criticism, attacks on attitudes and ethnicity, whereas there was no significant correlation between paternalistic leadership and task pressures. The regression analyses revealed that paternalistic leadership was significantly predictors of work-related criticism, social isolation, non-work-related criticism, attacks on attitudes and ethnicity.

Key Words

Leadership, Paternalistic Leadership, Bullying, Negative Acts, Classroom Teacher.

Bullying has been identified as a prevalent problem in the workplace in many countries (Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik 2010; Nielsen et al., 2009; Riley, Duncan, & Edwards, 2011; Salin 2001). Similarly, workers experience workplace bullying in Turkey (Bilgel, Aytac, & Bayram, 2006). Bullying has an effect on the workers as it is related to a number of health problems such as physical illness, depression, social isolation, and insomnia (Hogh, Henriksen, & Burr, 2005; Karakuş & Çankaya, 2012). Also, bullying is associated with turnover, absenteeism, and decreased productivity, organizational climate and trust (Korkmaz & Cemaloğlu, 2010; Rodriguez-Munoz, Baillien, De Witte, Moreno-Jimenez, & Pastor, 2009). Teacher may be exposed to bullying originating from the principal, colleagues, parents and students (Cemaloğlu & Ertürk, 2008; Yaman, Vidinlioğlu, & Çitemel, 2010).

Bullying has grave negative consequences for targets and witnesses (Cooper, Hoel, & Faragher, 2004; Vartia, 2010). The witnesses of bullying more often reported stress, and feeling of low job satisfaction

than employees form the workplaces without bullying (Vartia, 2001). Therefore bullying is increasingly recognized as a serious problem within the working environment, potentially carrying a very substantial cost to the organization (Hoel, Glaso, Hetland, Cooper, & Einarsen, 2010). Thus, understanding factors that prevent to bullying is essential for improving the information base needed to avoid negative organizational outcomes. Since leadership is one of the factors affecting bullying, the effect of different leadership approaches on bullying has researched (Cemaloğlu, 2007; Ertüren, 2008; Hauge et al., 2011; Stouten et al., 2010). One of these leadership styles affecting bullying is paternalistic leadership (Ertüren, 2008; Soylu, 2011). In Turkey, limited number of studies has explored the relationships between paternalistic leadership and bullying in non-educational domain, and no studies on this subject have been carried out in educational organizations in Turkey. There is a gap in Turkish literature on the relationship between paternalistic leadership and bullying. Hence, this study may contribute to

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the field by providing information about the relationship between paternalistic leadership and bullying. Therefore, this study examined relationship between paternalistic leadership and bullying.

Bullying

Bullying is differently defined in literature. Leymann (1996, p. 168) defined the bullying: "hostile and unethical communication that is directed in a systematic way by one or a number of persons toward one individual." Bullying is along-lasting, escalated conflict with frequent harassing actions systematically aimed at a target person (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996). Studies have found that bullying has negative effects on both employee well-being and health, and on commitment, job satisfaction, intention to leave, depression (Akar Yapıcı, Anafarta, & Sarvan, 2011; Hogg et al., 2005; Riley et al., 2011). Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone, verbal abuse, isolation, rumours, attack on personality, exposure to teasing, and insulting remarks (Çiçek Sağlam, 2008; Davenport, Schwartz, & Elliott, 2003; Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009; Hauge et al., 2011; Lutgen-Sandvik & Tracy, 2011). Research suggest that factors such as weak leadership, role conflict, lack of work control, workload, group pressure and social change as important variables for predicting bullying (De Wet, 2010; Duffy & Sperry, 2007; Kök, 2006; Stouten et al., 2010).

Paternalistic Leadership

In literature, since the 1980s, the fields of leadership and management in the business and educational sectors have been criticized for being dominated by Anglo-American intellectual and cultural frameworks, and for under-exploring the influence of various cultures on leadership (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). Many studies on leadership in non-Western societies have emerged that emphasize the importance of national cultures in shaping and explaining leadership in different societies, and the distinctions between leadership traditions in Western and non-Western societies (Law, 2012). Paternalistic leadership is one kind of leadership approaches in Middle East and Asia.

Gelfand, Erez, and Aycan (2007) defined paternalistic leadership as a "hierarchical relationship in which a leader guides professional and personal lives of subordinates in a manner resembling a parent, and in exchange expects loyalty and deference" (p. 493). The paternalistic management practice is

fundamentally based on respect and loyalty between management and workers (Yetim & Yetim, 2006). Paternalistic leaders guide both the professional and personal lives of their subordinates in a manner resembling a parent (Aycan & Fikret Paşa, 2003; Erben & Güneşer, 2008; Erkuş, Tabak, & Yaman, 2010).

Paternalistic leadership has been identified as a approach that combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence and moral integrity couched in a personalistic atmosphere (Cheng, Chou, Wu, Huang & Farh, 2004). Benevolence means that the leader's behavior demonstrates holistic concern for subordinates' personal or familial wellbeing. Moral leadership can be depicted as a leader's behavior that demonstrates superior personal virtues, self-discipline, and unselfishness. Authoritarianism refers to a leader's behavior that asserts absolute authority and control over subordinates and demands unquestionable obedience from subordinates (Chen & Kao, 2009; Cheng et al., 2004).

Turkey is highly collectivist culture (Hofstede, 2001) and it is logical to expect paternalistic leadership behaviors in Turkish organizations (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006, 2008). In Turkey, Aycan and Kung'u (2000) found that paternalistic leadership is an effective leadership style.

The Relationships between Paternalistic Leadership and Bullying

The relationship between leaderships and bullying was examined in the educational and non-educational setting. There are studies that examined the relationship between bullying and transformational, transactional, ethical, autocratiz, supportive and participative leadership (Cemaloğlu, 2007; De Wet, 2010; Hauge et al., 2011; Hoel et al., 2010; Stouten et al., 2010). Paternalistic leadership is related to experiencing bullying at work. Studies examining the relationship between paternalistic leadership and bullying were conducted in non-educational organizations in Turkey (Ertüren, 2008; Soylu, 2011). These studies indicated that there is negatively the relationship between paternalistic leadership and bullying. Soylu suggests that when employees were supervised by a manager who involved in the non-work domain and who sustained a family framework at work with maintaining individualised relationships, there were less incidents of bullying in the organization.

Method

Participants

The data were obtained from 487 teachers in 20 primary schools in Bolu province. Although the surveys were distributed to 335 of classroom teachers in the sample, 283 of classroom teachers, representing a response rate of 84.47%, responded to the surveys. Classroom teachers in the sample were 55.6% female, and 44.4% male. Teachers had from 5 to 28 years teaching experiences. 29% of teachers had completed a 2-year program with higher schools of education, 58% of teachers had completed a 4-year program with college degree, and 13% of teachers had a master's degree.

Instruments

The data in this study were collected using paternalistic leadership scale developed by Pellegrini and Scandura (2006) and Negative Act Questionnaire (NAQ) developed by Einarsen et al. (2009).

Negative Act Questionnaire (NAQ): The Negative Acts Questionnaire consists of 22 items. Five factors of NAQ are distinguished: (1) task pressures (5 items), work-related criticism (7 items), social isolation (4 items), non-work-related criticism (4 items) and attacks on attitudes and ethnicity (3 items).

To test the consistency of the factor structure for the sample of this study, factor analysis was performed to confirm underlying subscales of the NAQ. The compliance of the data with the factor analysis was ascertained with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett Sphericity test. KMO was 0.77 and Barlett Sphericity test (X^2 : 987,10, p : .000) was found to be meaningful. These results indicate that the scale is in compliance with the factor analysis. The results of factor analysis confirm the five factors structure of the NAQ for the sample of the present study. Load values of the items of task pressures factor ranged from .618 to .867, that of work-related criticism factor from .541 to .770, that of social isolation factor from .554 to .812, that of non-work-related criticism factor from .592 to .839, and that of attacks on attitudes and ethnicity factor from 0.589 to 0.713. The variances explained by the factors for the scale was found to be 70.74%.

Internal reliability was measured by using Cronbach alpha coefficient resulting in .81 for task pressures, .85 for work-related criticism, .83 for social isolation, .80 for non-work-related criticism, .82 for attacks on attitudes and ethnicity. According to the result, the NAQ is a reliable instrument for measuring bullying.

Paternalistic Leadership Scale: Paternalistic leadership scale is has 13-items. In this study, explanatory factor analysis was made for classroom teachers by the use of principal component with varimax rotations in the scale. The compliance of the data with factor analysis was tested by the use of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett Test of Sphericity. The KMO Measures of sampling adequacy was high for the sample, .85. The Barlett Test of Sphericity was significant for the sample X^2 : 370,33, p : .000. These results indicated that factor analysis was suitable for the sample. The factor analysis yielded the single factor. Load values of the items ranged from .575 to .836. The single factor did account for 64.03 % of variance on the scale.

Internal consistency was measured by using Cronbach Alpha coefficient and alpha coefficient was .85 for paternalistic leadership scale. It was also found that the item-total correlation of teachers' extra effort implementing program reform ranged from .575 to .836. Therefore, the internal consistency of the scale was reliable at an acceptable level.

Data Analysis

SPSS was used for the data analysis. Mean and standard deviation values were used to determine the level that primary school principals performed paternalistic leadership behaviours and level of bullying behaviours towards classroom teachers. Pearson correlations were carried out to explore whether a relationship exists between bullying and paternalistic leadership. The effects of paternalistic leadership on bullying were tested by utilizing stepwise regression analysis.

Results

According to means and standard deviations of teachers' scores for paternalistic leadership, it could be seen that primary school principals performed paternalistic leadership behaviours (\bar{x} : 2.96, ss : .45) was the midpoint of 3.0 on rating scale. The results showed that classroom teachers were the most exposed to factor of task pressures (\bar{x} : 2.16, ss : .56), while they were the least exposed to on-work-related criticism (\bar{x} : 1.50, ss : .32).

Correlation analysis indicated that there was a significant and negative relationship between paternalistic leadership and work-related criticism (r : -.436, p : .000), social isolation (r : -.544, p : .000), non-work-related criticism (r : -.527, p : .000) and attacks on attitudes and ethnicity (r : -.430, p : .000), while there was no significant correlation between paternalistic leadership and task pressures (r : -.052, p : .390).

The results of regression analyses revealed that paternalistic leadership had a significant effect on work-related criticism, social isolation, non-work-related criticism and attacks on attitudes and ethnicity. Yet, paternalistic leadership had no significant impact on task pressures. According to these results, paternalistic leadership was significant predictors of work-related criticism, social isolation, non-work-related criticism and attacks on attitudes and ethnic.

Discussion

The results of this study revealed that there was a negative and significant relationship between the paternalistic leadership and work-related criticism, social isolation, non-work-related criticism and attacks on attitudes and ethnicity, and that the paternalistic leadership had a significant effect on work-related criticism, social isolation, non-work-related criticism and attacks on attitudes and ethnicity. The findings are consistent with the results of previous studies which indicate that the paternalistic leadership was negatively associated with bullying at workplace (De Wet, 2010; Einarsen et al., 2009; Soylu, 2011). The paternalistic leaders take on a father-like role. S/he is involved in every aspect of employees' lives and provides guidance and counseling in professional lives. Also, paternalist leaders concern for employees' job-related and personal well-being. The basic paternalistic leadership behaviors are creating a family atmosphere in the workplace, establishing close and individualized relationship with employees (Aycan & Fikret Paşa, 2003). Also, hostile interaction at workplace and negative organizational culture cause bullying at workplace (Yaman, 2010). Therefore, it may be expected that paternalistic leadership is related to bullying at workplace. Based on the results, it can be stated that principal with paternalist leadership style would lead to fewer incidents of bullying behavior in their schools.

In this study, it was found that paternalistic leadership has no significant effect on task pressure. The finding is inconsistent with the results of previous studies. Soylu (2011) found that there was negatively associated with task pressure. Paternalistic leaders provide guidance and support to the employees in professional (Aycan, Kanungo, & Sinha, 1999). In Turkey, the studies revealed that teachers were not supported by their principals in terms of professional activities (Şişman, 2004). This issue may lead to that teachers do not expect to support their principals. It may be natural that there was no significant correlation between paternalistic leadership and task pressures.

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